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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between variables of ethnic and sex-role stereotype and job satisfaction based on Festinger's dissonance avoidance theory and Bruner and Tagirui's implicit personality theory. The respondents were 114 American Indian female supervisors, out of a representative sample of 200. The data were collected using a three-part questionnaire developed for this study. Ethnic stereotype was measured using indicators of cross-cultural, reciprocal, and self-stereotype. Sex role stereotype was measured using indicators of self-image, males' stereotype of feminine women and women's perceptions of males' stereotype of feminine women. Job satisfaction was measured using indicators of the social aspects of the job, intrinsic aspects, situational determinants, ecological environment, and compensation. The data were analyzed by multivariate regression techniques. The regression coefficient of ethnic stereotype and sex-role stereotype on job satisfaction was .22 and .37, respectively. The variables of ethnic and sex-role stereotype had a .60 correlation. The findings suggest that American Indian female supervisors feel that being seen in the role of the female American Indian supervisor has influenced them negatively. The study is applicable to employers of minority women who work in a supervisory educational setting and raises questions of equal opportunity and equity within educational systems. (KS)

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American Indian Women: The Double Bind

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between variables of ethnic and sex-role stereotype and job satisfaction based on Festinger's (1957) dissonance avoidance theory and Bruner and Tagirui's (1954) implicit personality theory. The sample was composed of 114 American Indian female supervisors.

The collection of data was completed using a three part questionnaire developed for the study. Ethnic stereotype was measured using indicators of cross-cultural, reciprocal, and self-stereotype. Sex role stereotype was measured using indicators of self-image, males' stereotype of feminine women and women's perceptions of males' stereotype of feminine women. Job satisfaction was measured using indicators of the social aspects of the job, intrinsic aspects, situational determinants, ecological environment and compensation.

The data were statistically treated using the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and reliability was establishing using Spearman Brown.

The study is applicable to employers of minority women who work in an supervisory educational setting and raises questions of equal opportunity and equity within educational systems.

INTRODUCTION

The American Indian stereotype has been woven into accounts of, and by, American Indians since the origins of reports which focused on the descriptions of their culture and unique ethnicity. These stereotypic representations have been heightened by media representations and have been widely accepted in the literature. Also, cultural stereotypes about the nature of work and women have been so persistent in the history of the working woman that the wide range of women's experiences as laboring people has been ignored in favor of stereotypical expectation (Murphy, 1988).

This paper focuses on the combination of centuries of stereotypical representations of female American Indians and working women to a study of American Indian women supervisors. This combination has permitted the presentation of the American Indian female as the "squaw" or the "Cherokee princess" (Jaimes, 1982). Modern sociological assumptions recognized the contradiction of designating American Indian women in stereotypes, particularly those in leadership positions. The modern American Indian female has been viewed in the context of these historic stereotypes, particularly if she has attempted to maintain her cultural identity within the scope of the non-Indian society. While historic study has revealed that stereotypes of American Indian women were founded in misinterpretations of observations from a dominant culture, many have remained primary in modern descriptions of Native American women. Examples of such misrepresentations are numerous and can be found in several modern sociological perspectives (Dwers, 1962; Devereux, 1961; Schubert & Cropley, 1972; Trimble, 1977; Weist, 1980).

Among Indians of the Great Plains, the position of women was decidedly different than was often assumed (Terrell and Terrell, 1974). Conclusions were that in the vast majority of the hundreds of American Indian tribes, whether their social structure was patrilineal, matrilineal, or bilateral, women not only enjoyed well-defined prerogatives, but among a large number of societies wielded considerable social, religious, and political

power. These examples now can be explained logically and can be understood clearly within the cultural framework of a particular band of tribe.

With these examples, it has become easier to understand the role of the American Indian female in the power structure of varied cultures. In many of the nearly 300 distinct pre-white societies, women held power. The Iroquois, for example, had a society approximately 400 years ago which has been described as most nearly a true matriarchy as has ever existed in modern or ancient time (Anderson, 1981). In analyzing the status of women in a particular aboriginal tribe, one is confronted with irrefutable evidence that their rank was predicated upon certain premises: "the conditions of the environment, the nature of the economy, the forms of social and political institutions, and the kind of domination exercised by gods" (Terrell and Terrell, 1974, p. 28). Miller (1978) asserted that a new Native American woman was emerging--one who managed in both a traditional culture and a dominant one. These women represented a "changing woman", whose role opened them personally to discredit and ridicule in their society. Wittstock (1976) observed that those Native American women who sought to preserve tribal identity in an "outside" world eventually became ritualized in their opinions. One essayist (Rhea, 1970) advocated the basic applied Rogerian concept in regard to the study of Indians as a group, i.e., learn from the group itself rather than bringing outside observations into the study.

One dilemma which has continued to face Native American women has been acultural. It has been the dilemma of the changing, emerging progressive role of all women in a dominant society. The assimilation of American Indian women into a predominantly Anglo society has contributed to their own kind of "identity" crisis", often weakening their role within the tribe (Jaimes, 1982). The duplication of stereotype, resulting in a "double bind" (a term coined in 1972 by Frances Beale, see King, 1988) for American Indian women supervisors will be discussed within the framework of the variable job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been defined and described in constructs which have a research basis. Specifically, does the manner in which American Indian women supervisors view their co-

workers perceptions of ethnic and sex-role stereotypes correlate with their perceptions of job satisfaction.

The questions tested in the study included the following:

1. Is there a correlation between the perception of ethnic stereotype and the perception of job satisfaction among American Indian female supervisors.
2. Is their a correlation between the perception of sex role stereotype and the perception of job satisfaction among American Indian female supervisors.
3. Is there a correlation between the perceptions of stereotype and the perception of job satisfaction for American Indian female supervisors.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study was based on Festinger's (1957) early analysis of cognitive dissonance and on Bruner and Tagirui's (1954) study of implicit personality theory. These conceptual analyses served as the basis for discussion of the perceptions of stereotypes, particularly ethnic and sex-role stereotyping, as well as the basis for discussion of dissonance within the world of work. The concept of cognitive dissonance as it related to the culture of American Indian women provided a "fit" for the study of relationships primarily because cognitive dissonance included cultural conditions in its assumptions.

In the concept of cognitive dissonance, the assumptions for avoidance interfaced with the concept of implicit personality theory to clarify the perceptions of American Indian women supervisors. Festinger's (1957) hypothesis of dissonance avoidance proposed that pressure to reduce dissonance appeared as soon as the dissonance was manifested. Individuals changed cognitions about behaviors by changing actions, or by changing knowledge about behaviors. Dissonance could arise because of cultural mores. The dissonance existed because the culture defined what was consonant, and what was not.

Implicit personality theory, as proposed by Bruner and Tagurui (1954), addressed the culture of individuals. This theory examined generalizations made by individuals. The

study of stereotypes is a determination of an individual's general perceptions of others. Since implicit personality theory is a hypothetical construct of what is perceived inside a person's head, it includes "trait elements" or "attributes of personality" that an individual believes others possess. The individual also believes that there are inferential relations among trait elements. Researchers designated this construct as implicit because they assumed that individuals can be unaware that they infer certain trait elements in most situations.

METHODOLOGY

The collection of the data was completed using a three-part questionnaire developed for this study. Each of the following variables was measured on a separate instrument developed for use in this study and incorporated into one questionnaire: Ethnic stereotype, Sex-Role stereotype, and Job Satisfaction.

Ethnic stereotype was measured through the administration of a twenty-three item questionnaire based on indicators of ethnic stereotype reported in a review of the literature, including: cross culture stereotype (government, language, tradition); reciprocal stereotype (conformity, customs, physical characteristics); and self-stereotype (customs, physical characteristics, names). Sex-role stereotype was measured through the administration of a twenty item questionnaire based on these indicators: self-image, males' stereotype of feminine women; women's perceptions of males' stereotype of feminine women. Job satisfaction was measured by indicators which included: social aspect of the job (interaction, accessibility, peer relations, supervisory method, human relations skills, organizational climate); intrinsic aspects (status, self-actualization, job involvement); situational determinants (span of control, size, scope, level); ecological environment sources of influence (working conditions); and compensation (expectation, performance).

DATA SOURCE and FINDINGS

The sample represented a national profile of American Indian women professionals who supervised in the following areas: Art, Business, Communication, Education, Health

Care, Law, Science, Social Work, and Tribal Business. The total number used in the study was 116 which represented 58 per cent of the initial two hundred individuals in the sample. Demographic information which was used to project a profile of American Indian women supervisors included the following: age, tribal affiliation, number of males/females supervised, professional area, salary, performance evaluation, and formal education.

The questionnaire, which was developed for this study, allowed the investigator to assign a subscore on each of the three variables, so that for each respondent, there was a score for ethnic stereotype, sex-role stereotype, and job satisfaction. The data were analyzed using correlation coefficients.

Correlations of Stereotype Perceptions/Job Satisfaction

FEMALE AMERICAN INDIAN SUPERVISORS

	R-Square	Job Satisfaction Multiple R
Ethnic stereotype	0.0486	.2206203
Sex-Role stereotype	0.1381	.3716533
Ethnic stereotype & Sex-Role Stereotype	0.1381	.3716731
N = 116		F 18.2700

The multiple R represented the maximum correlation between the dependent variable of job satisfaction and a weighted combination of ethnic and sex-role stereotyping. As illustrated in Table I, ethnic stereotype produced a multiple R of .3716731. The variables of ethnic and sex-role stereotype have a .60 correlation with each other. They appear to be much the same and the contribution of ethnic stereotype to the correlation of job satisfaction is minimal.

For the total sample, research question one appeared to be valid as stated. The second research question involved the negative relationship between perceptions of sex-role and job satisfaction. For the overall group, this relationship was moderate. The correlation was negative and its strength significant. It appeared that this population felt more pressure from the typical female sex-role stereotype, than with that of the female American Indian stereotype. One reason this may be true is that this population may be ethnocentric and not tend to view the stereotype of the Indian as a negative one, particularly within a predominantly Native community, like the world of work. The female sex-role, on the other hand, if founded in a stereotype from a predominantly white culture, and this population appeared to feel less comfortable with that acculturation.

The last research question involving the interactive correlation of perceptions of ethnic and sex-role stereotyping to job satisfaction may be viewed through the shared

variance of ethnic and sex-role stereotype reported. The analysis indicated that there is a significant correlation between perceptions of ethnic stereotype and perceptions of sex-role stereotype.

These significant relationships ranged from .42 to .86. Combining the two stereotypes tended to compound the problems for the sample. However, as indicated in the conclusions based on the research question regarding ethnic stereotype, the interaction of the two may have tended to eliminate some of the negative effects of the sex-role stereotype in favor of the ethnic stereotype. It was evident that an individual who tended to report perceptions of ethnic stereotype also tended to report perceptions of sex-role stereotype.

The study did not attempt to delineate between the sample's assessment of a stereotyped role as positive or negative, yet from the relationships reported, it is evident that some American Indian female supervisors feel that it has influenced them negatively to be seen in the role of the female American Indian supervisor. They do feel more uncomfortable with the sex-role stereotype alone, and it appeared they viewed this stereotype negatively.

This assessment of the practical implications is based on the issues this research has generated, rather than on the issues of relationships presented by the data studied in this sample. While these implications are a result of tangential questions of cause and effect, the relationship data presented and discussed should serve as a basis for further areas of research. These practical implications focus, therefore, on the need to re-evaluate the assumptions of the "double bind" as to focus on future inquiry in the field of stereotyping.

The conclusions drawn form the correlations of this study elicit further questions. These correlations, as well as others not assessed, may contribute to the perceptions of job satisfaction for the American Indian female supervisor. The review of related research has established the "double bind" as a focus of inquiry. This research established the strength and weaknesses of various relationships within the scope of the "double bind". Clearly,

further study in the area of inferential relationships would provide a link to the practical questions generated from this study.

The Indian, by and large, has been a motif embedded in America, not perceived as part of the American present. The confusion has resulted form the fact that often Indian people have been mistaken for the Indian (Dorris, 1981). The management implications resulting from this study have focused on the assessment of individuals.

Employers of a work force which may include American Indian women, particularly supervisors, have been aware that job performance is influenced by job satisfaction. The training, expense, and energy which is required of a supervisor in the recruitment and retention of qualified Indian women should provide motivation for continuing effort to study this segment of the work force.

The framework and concepts, as well as the evaluations and conclusions, studied here represented those of American Indian female supervisors with emphasis on educational leaders. .As the law has demanded equal opportunity for this population, the questions of equality can only be addressed by the employers and the employees. Available evidence which strengthens or weakens the perceptions of job satisfaction is clearly an important consideration for potential educational employers and could add to the self-awareness of employees. The relationship between employers and employees can be strengthened with this awareness.

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